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1996/01/31

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

January 31, 1996

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

It has come to our attention that Iran recently test-fired a new, low-flying cruise missile. This missile was identified as a C-802 anti-ship missile, which is produced by the People's Republic of China (PRC). If that is the case, we believe sanctions may have to be imposed against the appropriate parties in the PRC pursuant to federal law. This warrants your immediate attention.

As you may know, today's New York Times reported that the Iranian Navy test fired a C-802 cruise missile from the northern Arabian Sea on January 6, 1996. Vice Admiral Scott Redd, Commander-in-Chief of the United States Fifth Fleet, stated that the C-802 adds a "new dimension" to Iran's military capabilities against free shipping in the Persian Gulf. This mobile missile can evade radar and will make any missile offensive launched by the Iranian Navy difficult to track.

Mr. President, Title XVI of the Fiscal Year 1993 Department of Defense Authorization Bill contains the Iran-Iraq Non-Proliferation Act. This act provides for sanctions against any persons and countries, respectively, that transfer certain advanced conventional weapons to Iran. The act also defines advanced conventional weapons to include "long-range precision-guided munitions" and "cruise missiles."

Clearly, Admiral Redd's acknowledgement of the C-802 test-firing would appear to be an official recognition of an illegal transfer to Iran of advanced conventional weapons by Chinese defense industrial trading companies. Please inform us as soon as possible of your intention either to enforce the sanctions pursuant to federal law, or to seek a waiver.

Thank you for your attention to this vital national security matter.

Sincerely,

Larry Pressler

Abe Fortas

John Edwards

Connie Mack